

WEBER THOMPSON



## MEETING MINUTES

TODAY'S DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ MEETING #: Workshop #4  
MEETING DATE: 090709  
PROJECT NAME: SLU Urban Design Framework PROJECT #: 09-016 SERVICE: C / UD

SUBJECT: Workshop #4: Residential Neighborhoods

LOCATION: Weber Thompson, 225 Terry Ave N. CR #4

ATTENDING:	CLIENT NAME	COMPANY NAME	INITIALS
	Marshall Foster	City of Seattle, OPM	MF
	Jim Holmes	City of Seattle, DPD	JH
	Darby Watson	City of Seattle, SDOT	DW
	Geoffrey Wentlandt	City of Seattle, DPD	GW
	Peter Dobrovolny	City of Seattle, DPD	PD
	Eric Tweit	City of Seattle, SDOT	ET
	Dan Foltz	Weber Thompson	DF
	Catherine Benotto	Weber Thompson	CB
	Brian Steinburg	Weber Thompson	BS
	Jim Westcott	Weber Thompson	JW
	Myer Harrel	Weber Thompson	MH
	Amanda Keating	Weber Thompson	AK
	Mahlon Clements	Bumgardner	MC
	Matt Roewe	Via Architects	MR
	John Savo	NBBJ	JS
	John Pearson	LUOA	JP
	Lloyd Douglass	CNC	LD
	Sharon Coleman	Vulcan	SC
	Ron Turner		RT

## **Introduction**

### **Purpose of Workshop #4:**

1. Provide guidance to future charette teams so that they can study charette topics in more detail
2. Provide guidance to the City of Seattle for the SLU EIS and revisions to the neighborhood plan, design guidelines, etc.

### **Goals of Workshop #4:**

1. Identify what makes for good, safe, active urban residential neighborhoods and document an urban design response or guiding principals.
2. Document strategies for residential urban rooms, streetscapes and street edges which may inform charettes dealing with incentives.
3. Record specific urban design recommendations for what will make SLU supportive of residential development accommodating...
  - a. Multi-income housing
  - b. Multi-generational housing
  - c. Family oriented housing
  - d. Live-work / Artist studio or other “flex” housing

### **Structure of Workshop #4:**

1. ½ hour introduction and topic discussion with background info
2. 3 hours group break outs
3. ½ hour reporting

## **Characteristics of Good Urban Residential Neighborhoods**

1. **What makes good, safe, active urban residential neighborhoods:**
  - a. **Human Scale Facades (height and width):**
    - Provide rhythm
    - Proportioned to the street width
    - For taller buildings use architectural elements to reduce the perceived height
    - Quality materials in the 1<sup>st</sup> 40 feet – most perceived area.
  - b. **Street Character:**
    - Wide Sidewalks
    - Emphasis on the Pedestrian
    - Attention to Details
    - Townhomes or live work lofts should be set back from property line with a semi-private transition area, and up 3-4' from the ground plane where possible.
  - c. **Alleys**
    - Activate alleys as place for small businesses, arts, nightlife and recreation as well as building services. Look to Melbourne, Amsterdam as a model.
  - d. **Supporting Infrastructure:**
    - Library

- Preferred Location at Teardrop Site (promotes crossing Mercer, breaks down barrier similar to Lake Union Park, accessible to pan-handle, accessible to Uptown).
- Community Center
  - Preferred Location at Denny Park
- Open Spaces
  - Semi-Private open spaces should support public realm
  - Pocket parks should be targeted in residential areas either as capital investment or incentivized development.
- Recreational Facilities (Basketball court, children's play equipment)
  - Soccer / Large field sports will be accommodated by Century 21 Plan redevelopment of Seattle Center – encourage prioritization to accommodate growing downtown population
  - Children's playgrounds are located at Cascade (successful) and Denny Park (less successful – no slides, swings or monkeybars).
- Retail / Services
- Dog off leash areas
  - Possible locations include directly East of the Gates foundation included as a trade-off for accepting their alternative 6<sup>th</sup> avenue alignment.
- Urban agriculture
  - Possible locations include directly East of the Gates foundation included as a trade-off for accepting their alternative 6<sup>th</sup> avenue alignment.
  - On the West side of I-5, terraced garden buffer.
- School
  - Potential sites are the SCL property on 8<sup>th</sup> between Roy and Aloha, or the teardrop site.
- e. Safety:**
  - Eyes on the street
  - Commercial development must support nightlife and weekend activity (no dead plazas).
    - Focus “destination” retail establishments here, nightlife venues, restaurants, and 7 day a week retail.
    - Mix 9-5 activity with 5-11 activity (or later).
  - Sense of transition to townhouses from public – semi private – private spaces
- f. Transportation Connections:**
  - Easy access to transit (N-S, E-W)
  - Walking as a viable option (pedestrian prioritization)
- g. Tunnel Infrastructure Integration:**
  - Art / Architectural Expression is key
  - Exhaust / Noise minimization is key
  - Incorporating a commercial use with infrastructure (activating the edges) would be a preferable solution to stand alone vent
  - Making the infrastructure a backdrop to active use (play courts) on the West side of the block.

**2. What are negative urban design responses in urban residential neighborhoods:**

**a. Ground plane housing**

- No privacy for resident, immediate transition from public space to private

- Front doors at property line makes the public sidewalk feel less public
- b. Private Internal courtyards separated from public areas**
  - Semi-Private open spaces can help activate the public realm and support a sense of community when they are adjacent and support each other, but not when completely separated.
- 3. What is required to support families in the neighborhood:**
  - a. 2+ bedroom housing units**
    - Units that will support a growing family
  - b. Walking distance to amenities**
    - Library
    - Community center
    - Parks and recreation (playground)
    - Grocery store (walking to daily needs, transit to weekly shopping)
    - School / Daycare access (private school and daycare options exist in the area, but public options are limited to the Center School at the Seattle Center).
- 4. What is required to support the elderly in the neighborhood:**
  - a. Housing choices and diversity**
    - Assisted Living vs. Active Living Communities
    - Co-housing (or other alternative models that provide for community and self-sufficiency)
    - Affordable / flexible housing options that allow multi-generational living within the same neighborhood.
- 5. What is required to support income diversity in the neighborhood:**
  - a. Affordable housing for low-moderate income families**
    - Eliminate parking requirements or reduce parking allowed (i.e. maximum parking standards), encourage transit and shared car use (Zipcar).

## **Team Reports**

### **Team 1**

- 1. 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue:**
  - a. 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue should be zoned for residential only between John and Republican**
  - b. Pedestrian oriented street**
  - c. Public / Semi-Private / Private**
    - Cross-block connections
    - Semi-Private open spaces located in alley or mid-block
    - Public Pocket park opportunities should be emphasized in this corridor.
  - d. Retail**
    - Retail may be located at corners of Harrison and Thomas
- 2. Uptown Triangle:**
  - a. Uptown Triangle should be zoned for mixed-use with an emphasis on Residential:**
  - b. Thomas and John should be green streets**
  - c. Utilities under Broad may be issue for redeveloping blocks currently bisected by ROW.**

- These blocks may be restored and used for open space uses, or light development
- Utilities may need to be relocated as a part of re-establishing grid (are their development incentives that can defray the cost?)

**3. Cascade Neighborhood:**

**a. Residential Uses with some retail use should surround the park:**

- All sides / corners

**b. Cross Block connections should be encouraged to supplement pedestrian friendly atmosphere:**

**Team 2**

**1. General Discussion Points / Themes:**

**a. Live on the Streets, Not the Avenues:**

- Refers to New York, and other East coast planning models where Avenues provide dense commercial and retail activity, and the streets provide dense residential and light supportive retail opportunities.
- Our "Avenues" = Mercer, Valley, 5<sup>th</sup>, Aurora, Dexter, Westlake, Fairview and Eastlake
- All other streets in SLU would be considered "Streets"

**b. Green Factor:**

- Apply to SM zone and / or SLU to incentivize green space

**c. Townhomes / Stoop residential development:**

- May be difficult for projects that are not full block developments.
- Typically need to allow for stoops to encroach in public ROW – east coast model.
- Vancouver style townhomes are very expensive, and thus hard to sell.
- Relationship to street grade is key – setback, steps up to front entry, landscaping buffer

**d. Urban Room:**

- Set Base height relationship to ROW width (between 1 H : 1 W for narrower streets to 1H : 1.5W for wider streets), with exceptions made for towers that should be encouraged to meet the street.
- Encourage a variety of building heights

**e. Develop Street design plans:**

- Piecemeal development of streetscape (like downtown) creates inconsistent street treatments and character.
- Develop street designs for the following: Dexter (from Denny to the Fremont Bridge), 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Thomas, Terry, Boren, Fairview.

**2. 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor:**

**a. 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue should be zoned for residential only between John and Republican:**

- similar to the DMR designation vs. the DMC designation
- Stoops may be hard to accomplish on 8<sup>th</sup> in a meaningful way (i.e. only 3 blocks long, will everyone develop them). Townhomes w/ stoops may be best for mid-block connections.

**b. 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue as Open Space**

- The street should become an active space that can be shut down with emergency access, or limited traffic.
- Curbless profile would make the entire ROW a single room.

**c. Public / Semi-Private / Private**

- Semi-Private open spaces should engage the 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue public room and support it with multi-use activities. Plazas to sit in, urban agriculture gardens to work in, areas for children to play in.
- Limited parking (possibly only load / unload, short-term) allowed.
- Pocket Parks should be located in this corridor on “undevelopable” lots or by targeted purchase, or incentivized development.

**d. Retail**

- No retail on 8<sup>th</sup>
- Walk 1 block to Dexter or 9<sup>th</sup>, make 8<sup>th</sup> purely residential.
- Can't have retail everywhere, so focus on less residential street.

**3. Uptown Triangle:**

- a. Uptown Triangle should be zoned for mixed-use with an emphasis on Residential**
- b. Taylor should be a green street**

Other General Comments or Observations:

**ALL** After reviewing these minutes, if you have any comments or corrections, please notify us within seven days of receipt or we will assume you concur with the above.